

tearfund

Following Jesus where  
the need is greatest

# Caring for God's Creation Canterbury Diocese Environment Conference

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# 1. A radical re-appraisal of our culture of consumption

‘the idea of unlimited growth... is based on the lie that there is an infinite supply of the earth’s goods, and this leads to the planet being squeezed dry beyond every limit.’

‘Our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience.’

‘A consumerist vision of human beings... has a levelling effect on cultures, diminishing the immense variety of which is the heritage of all humanity.’

# How can we live this re-appraisal out ourselves?

## 1. Redefine our understanding of progress

‘A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress.’

## 2. Limit and direct technology

‘We can put [technology] at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral.’

### 3. Cultivate gratitude

‘...a recognition that the world is God’s loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works.’

## 4. Be happy with little

‘Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack.’



## 2. Lifestyle/praxis change

‘Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle...

... can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world. The effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now.'

# How can we live this out where we are?

## 1. Redefine our understanding of progress

‘A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress.’

# Good habits and sound virtues

- Individual things we can all do (food, travel, energy, waste)
- Community actions
- Eco Church

# 3. Inner Ecological Conversion

‘The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast.’

(Pope Benedict XVI)

# Leads to us taking our proper place in our common home

‘The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures...

...In this way, they make their own that trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.'

# An integral ecology that comes from a Christian spirituality

We need a spirituality that ‘can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of the world. A commitment this lofty cannot be sustained by doctrine alone.’



# Time

‘ An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideas, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us’.

# Rhythm

‘Rest opens our eyes to the larger picture and gives us renewed sensitivity to the rights of others. And so the day of rest, centred on the Eucharist, sheds its light on the rest of the week, and motivates us to greater concern for nature and the poor.’

# To finish...

‘For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love’